

# mma newsletter

sharing hope, health and life

## medical mission aid inc.

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Above: Children in the village near DHERSEC's operations



Photos above: Anjali before and after surgery



## DHERSEC, Nepal

Caring for people with disability and the extremely poor

Disabled and Helpless Rehabilitation Service Centre (DHERSEC) is a non-profit organisation in Nepal, established in June 2006 with a vision to support people with disability (PWD) as well as those living in extreme poverty. Support is being provided in many ways. Firstly, there is a huge need for medical support and access to healthcare, and DHERSEC is providing preventative health checks as well as medication and funding for surgery. Aids and appliances, such as wheelchairs and artificial limbs, are being supplied as needed. DHERSEC is also working to enhance livelihood opportunities by arranging training on various skills such as servicing and repair of mobile phones, sewing and cooking. DHERSEC also empowers those who are illiterate, providing awareness around communication, capacity building, social issues, health, food and sanitation. This fantastic organisation also advocates for the rights of PWD.

There is no medicare in Nepal, so extremely underprivileged people are unable to receive medical care as even the public health system is not free. There have no NDIS or disability allowances, no jobseeker or unemployment benefits, no government housing - it is incredibly difficult to survive in Nepal if you don't have a job. DHERSEC offers hope for a better life – a chance for improved health and a chance to escape from the poverty cycle.

Anjali is a delightful 13 year old and lives in Dhankuta, a small town in rural Nepal. Anjali is from a very poor family. Her mother is deaf and her father is a vegetable seller whose average daily income is NPR 500 (about \$6). She was diagnosed with fibrous dysplasia on her forehead. This is a bone condition in which abnormal fibrous tissue develops in place of normal bone. As these areas of fibrous tissue grow and expand over time, they can weaken the bone, causing it to fracture or become deformed. As her family was unable to pay for treatment at a public hospital, her family sought help from DHERSEC and Anjali was able to undergo a very successful surgery.



Prince, aged 8, belongs to the Musahar Caste - one of the lowest of the Dalit (or untouchables) castes, who suffer tremendously from their status in society. This mother went door to door, trying to collect money so that her son could have vital surgery on his broken and infected arm. People in the community contacted DHERSEC, who found a surgeon to perform the operation and paid for medication, an ambulance and accommodation.



This beautiful boy, also named Prince, was born with Myelomeningocele - the most severe type of spina bifida. It results in a fluid-filled sac protruding from the baby's back that contains part of their spinal cord and nerves. Symptoms include moderate to severe disabilities, such as muscle weakness, loss of bladder or bowel control, hydrocephalus and/or paralysis. With DHERSEC's support, life saving surgery to close the spinal defect and drain excess fluid from his brain was successfully completed.

**DHERSEC is in desperate need of a corporate sponsor.** If you know of anyone who could help, please ask them to contact Shanta at [mmaexd@gmail.com](mailto:mmaexd@gmail.com)

## Chairo Christian School

What an absolute pleasure it was to visit the delightful year 12 students in Pakenham. This school embodies the very essence of Christianity, instilling a passion to serve others. It was a wonderful opportunity to explore the hearts and gifts of the students and what it looks like to live a life of impact and significance, whilst showcasing the fantastic work of our overseas partners. A special thank you to Diego, Mayen, Sonia and Anotidaishe who stayed back to 'workshop' how best to engage the next generations in the work of MMA.



Top Photo: Kilimatinde Outreach, Tanzania Bottom Photo: Diego, Mayen, Sonia and Anotidaishe

## Tanzania Statistics

Do you ever wonder whether the global issues we face today are too large and question if programs such as those MMA supports are making a difference? These statistics show that there have been significant changes. Your support has played a part in this.

- **Under 5 mortality rate** - In 1990 there were **165.6** deaths /1000 live births. Now it is down to **48.9** deaths - less than one third of what it was (Australia is 3.7)
- **Life expectancy** - **50.8** in 2000, **65.81** in 2021 (WHO)

## Deputations & Autumnfest 2022

It has been wonderful to be able to visit churches again after Covid and share the mission and impact of MMA. A big thank you to St Stephen's Warrandyte, St Mark's Forest Hill, Mother's Union at GWAC and St Columb's Hawthorn for your warm welcome and your heart for social justice.

If you know of any churches, youth or young adult groups or small groups who have a passion for making a difference in the lives of the disadvantaged, please email Shanta at [mmaexd@gmail.com](mailto:mmaexd@gmail.com) - we would be delighted to provide a speaker!



It was terrific to catch up with MMA friends and supporters at our annual Autumnfest. Our focus this year was Tanzania. A big thank you to Dorothy Prentice and Amanda Ward for sharing their incredible Tanzanian experiences with us.

## Episcopcare, Egypt

After attending the awareness meeting on the ways of facing sexual abuse, D's neighbor tried to touch her body. She moved him away, then told his wife directly, and he never tried to face her again. The awareness meeting helped D to, "*defend myself and to educate my children on how to defend themselves too.*"

### Women's Health Program - changing lives

When S and her daughters travelled to Upper Egypt to visit her relatives there, her husband's family tried to circumcise her daughters. However, S refused and managed in persuade her husband to protect his daughters. According to S, "*my husband agreed with me and refuse our daughters circumcision.*"



## from the president



Dear MMA friends,

What a year we have had! Lockdowns, restrictions on travel, daily press releases about how we are travelling in the face of a medical crisis, and many people frightened to return to normal activities. Yet I am reminded we live in a country where medical help is universally available, even though there have been some difficulties with the increased demand.

My thoughts go to the developing world where the crisis we have seen in Australia is magnified, where very little health infrastructure is available, and in the places MMA supports, very little opportunity for many to access help when needed.

I write to thank all our supporting individuals and churches who have continued to believe with us that MMA can and does make a difference. Your continued prayer support and donations have enabled MMA to support the projects that are raising the standards of health care by the sponsorship of medical scholarships to train doctors, nurses and other allied health workers as well as community initiatives for health awareness. Please continue to uphold MMA and those we support in your prayers as many struggle in these challenging times.

As we see the beginning of spring in Australia which brings a sense of new beginnings and new life around us, I pray that you too will continue to be blessed in all you do. Thank you again for your support of MMA in your prayers and through your generous donations so MMA can continue to make a difference in the lives of so many.

Meryl McEwen

Please visit MMA's website or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn



<https://medicalmissionaid.org.au/>



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# Minority Focus, Nepal - Scholarship Program



MMA Graduates - Dinu and Som

Minority Focus, a faith based organization, began operations in 1985 with a purpose of providing partial scholarships to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain further education in technical, medical and vocational sectors. Their mission is to equip Christian students to become qualified leaders at all levels of society, and to impact communities and ultimately lead Nepal towards becoming a thriving nation. Medical Mission Aid has been involved in the training of students from poor economic backgrounds in the fields of Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry, General Medicine and Hospital Administration.

"I am very much grateful to Minority Focus and its inbound partner MMA for financial and encouraging supports to me during my studies. Please pray for me. I dreamed to initiate a Pharmacy Company in the future soon. I obtain my Diploma Certificate and license from the government. Please pray for me for the initiation of the company in near future, till that time I will keep engaged on this sector. I long to be a leading Pharmacy with justifiable costs of medicines so that our community can be served better." SOM

"Finally, for the first time in my life, I joined Sancho Hospital, worked as an ICU staff nurse as well COVID nursing staff. It was really a challenging time to serve the covid cases. It was not risk free, the LORD protected me and my colleagues in a team."

DINU

Som from Bagmati Province, one of the most earthquake affected districts, has just completed his Diploma in Pharmacy and would like to start a pharmacy in his remote community. Dinu is also from Bagmati Province, and is a baptized member and youth leader of Koinonia Samdan Church of Hetauda. Dinu's goal is to be a leader in nursing education.

**\$110/month** or \$1310 a year will provide a scholarship in Nepal or Tanzania for one student for one year.

## The story of Ayen Nai, South Sudan

by Anil Cherian

Jonglei State and Upper Nile are two states which were most affected by the 50-year civil war in Sudan. Jonglei State is one of the largest states in the Republic of South Sudan. Even though the people of this state played a vital role in securing the freedom of the southerners (now South Sudan) the state is largely under development and behind the other states in most of the developmental parameters. Recent research shows that only around five percent of girls complete their primary education and only 2.5% complete secondary school.



Ayen Nai completed her primary education in Malek near Bor. She was one of the five female candidates selected to study Clinical Medicine at the Bor Institute of Health Sciences in Bor Town. Nai proved to be an intelligent student and was consistently on the top of her class from the very beginning. She proved to the people around that women from rural South Sudan are equally capable and can become skilled and competent healthcare providers. While this is true in every part of the world, it is remarkable in a conservative male dominated society.

Ayen Nai not only performed well academically but was always available to help the other students especially the other girls. Some of these girls struggled in the first year. But seeing that Ayen Nai was able to perform well convinced them that they could also be equal. As a result, three of the five female students finally emerged among the academically top students.

Ayen Nai topped the National Health Professionals Board Examination and earned an average score of 84% and passing with distinction in all subjects. She also got the highest marks among all the 300 and over students in Medicine, Surgery and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

The success of Ayen Nai clearly shows us that in the last four years, the Jonglei Health Sciences Institute has emerged as one of the best performing health sciences institutes in South Sudan. However, our hope is that with her intelligence and strong work ethic, she will be able to inspire a young generation of Dinka girls to take up sciences in school and become skilled and competent health workers.



**\$125**

will reduce the financial burden of training fees of one student for one year.

want to help  
**mma?**

All donations  
over \$2 are  
tax-deductible

## There are four ways of donating to MMA:

### 1 Electronic transfer to MMA's account:

BSB 033 112 Name and Number: MMA Inc. 378527

Please enter your surname as 'description/reference' and email your contact details to: [mmaacts@gmail.com](mailto:mmaacts@gmail.com)

### 2 MMA Website

Please visit  
<https://medicalmissionaid.org.au/ways-to-give/donate/>

Please note 1.4% fees are deducted from these donations and a receipt will be automatically issued.

### 3 Cheque/Money Order payable to MMA Inc.

Mail cheque/money order together with your name, address or email address for receipt to:  
Medical Mission Aid, PO Box 1142, Surrey Hills North, Vic 3127

### 4 Paypal/Credit Card via MMA Inc Facebook page

Please visit  
<https://m.facebook.com/Medicalmissionaidaustralia/>

No fees are deducted from these donations and a receipt will be automatically issued by email if your FB page is linked to your email account.

## Donations may be designated to:

- General Funds **or**,
- Any specific project. Visit our website to see the list of current projects.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of a **Legacy Gift** to MMA. For more information, please contact [mmaexd@gmail.com](mailto:mmaexd@gmail.com) or visit <https://wills.gatheredhere.com.au/c/medical-mission-aid>

MMA Inc. is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and has been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a deductible gift receipt. ABN 36 062 783 362

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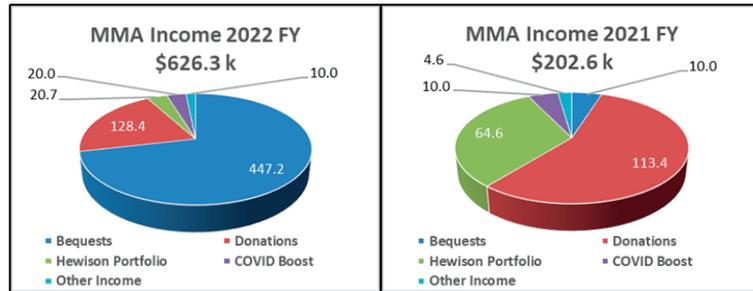
MMA is a not-for-profit Christian charity. Our mission is to show God's love in practical ways by supporting people in disadvantaged countries to improve health outcomes.

## Finance

by Barry Kelly

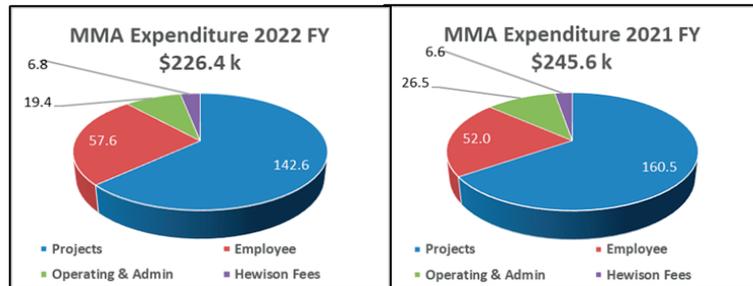
### 2022 FY Financial Information

#### MMA Income



- 2022 FY income increased thanks to a generous Betty Huston Bequest.
- 2022 FY donations were up by 13% on 2021 FY.
- Hewison Investment Portfolio (income and market appreciation) performance declined in 2022 FY on 2021 FY in line with share market volatility.
- Victorian Government COVID grant of \$20k received.

#### MMA Expenditure



- MMA distributed \$143k to 17 Project Beneficiaries during the 2022 FY.
- Operating expenses were well controlled.

#### The Impact

- A surplus of almost \$400k was recorded for 2022 FY (compared to a deficit of \$41k in 2021 FY).
- The on-going challenge for MMA to find additional sources of income remains in order for MMA to maintain an annual project distribution of \$140 - \$160k.



Medical Mission Aid was very excited to receive our official CMA Standards Council accreditation certificate in June at the annual CMA Conference. Meryl McEwen, Shanta Parker, Stephen Kerr (CMA)

## AGM/SPRING Celebration 2022

### MMA's AGM and Spring Celebration

Date: *Saturday* October 15th, 2022

Time: 1.30pm for a 2pm start

Venue: St Thomas Anglican Church, 44 Station St, Burwood

MMA's AGM/Spring Celebration will be a great opportunity to catch up with the MMA Community. Please feel free to bring a friend!